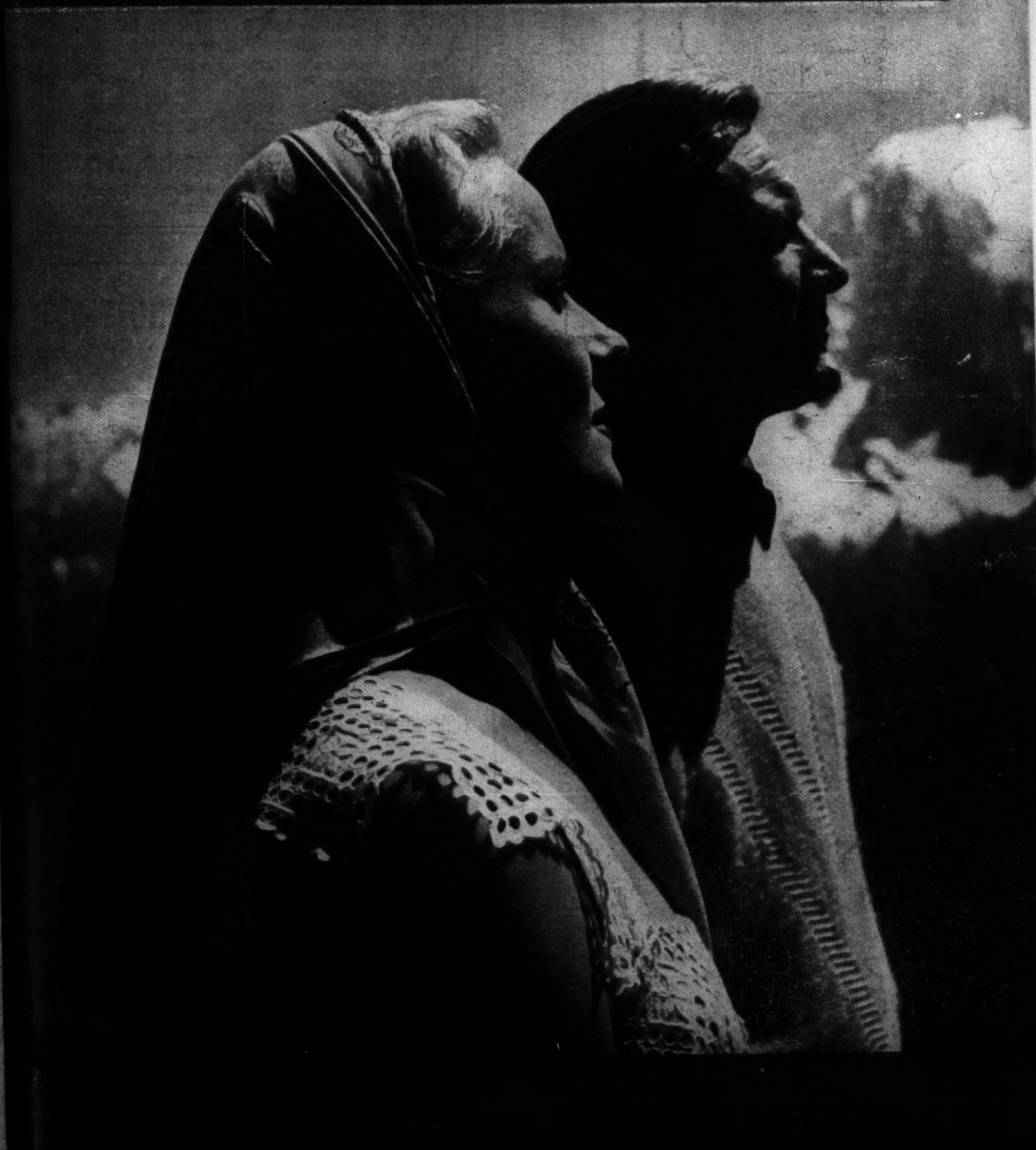


Film Monthly Review

JANUARY 1964

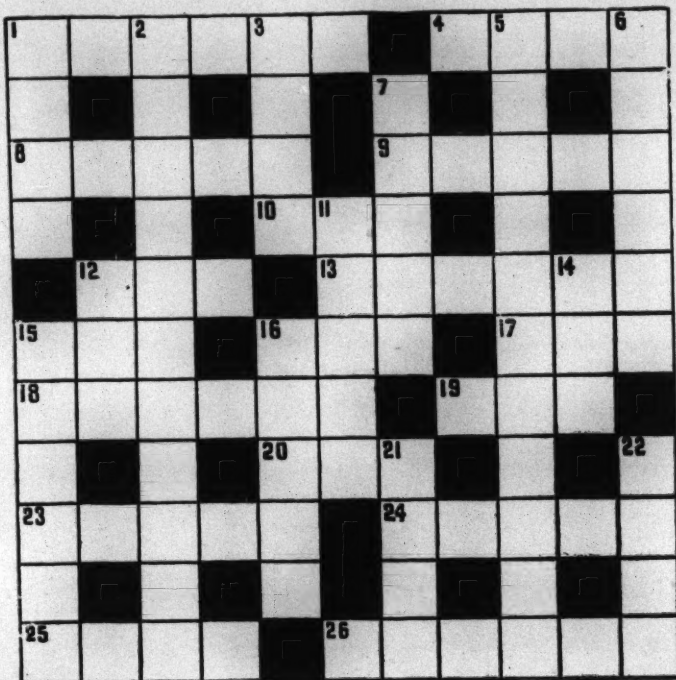
PRICE NINEPENCE



FILM CROSSWORD No. 13

SOLUTION NEXT MONTH

Solution to Crossword No. 12 at foot of column



ACROSS

1. Googie Withers played Joanna (6).
4. Popular radio show—but not a too successful film (4).
8. These were yellow in a Wilfrid Lawson film (5).
9. Type of native you would expect to see in "Eureka Stockade." (5).
10. First name of Miss Reeve (3).
12. First name of the "Cardboard Cavalier" (3).
13. Background for "Captain Boycott" (6).
14. Mr. McNaughton's first name (3).
15. Barbara—Geddes (3).
16. Joan Fontaine film (3).
17. You might say that "This Modern Age" is a kind of film progress one (6).
18. This Jack directed "Woman in the Hall" (3).
19. Alan Ladd film (3).
22. Great actor of "Jew Suss" (5).
23. A film composer (5).
24. Might be 15 down but

short for our leading film heart throb (4).

25. Often a meeting place in films. Lionel Atwill starred in a film about a wax one (6).

DOWN

1. Lilian and Dorothy (4).
2. He's Byron (6, 5).
3. First name of Mrs. Charles Laughton (4).
5. James Donald marries this character in this new film title (7, 4).
6. In "Odd Man out," Shell kept a small one (6).
7. Stature of the voice in Havelock—Allan's new film (5).
11. These are very popular in musical films by singers or musicians (5).
12. The girl's name was an action in "The Blind Goddess" (3).
14. Peter sounds like interments! (6).
15. Finlay Currie might be termed a this of a man (5).
20. Indian star of "The Drum" (4).
21. We usually see plenty of this in Dickens's film stories (4).



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Answer to Crossword No. 12, December issue.

CLUES ACROSS.—1, Jean Simmons. 7, Raimu. 8, Delhi. 10, Era. 11, Elmer. 12, Races. 14, Tin. 15, Smile. 18, Title. 20, Sir. 21, Salew. 22, Motet. 23, Simone Simon.

CLUES DOWN.—1, Jergens. 2, Axiom. 3, Stuart Erwin. 4, Modern Times. 5, Orlac. 6, Ski. 9, Era.

Film Monthly Review

JANUARY, 1949

Vol. 7, No. 1

EDITORIAL

COMPRISING, as we do, the vast mass of humanity, we film-goers naturally all have our widely different likes and dislikes. But whether we be serious, highbrow, pretentious, or merely film-star gazers there never has been any difficulty in obtaining film magazines that cater for our own particular tastes. However, it is only in the past fifteen months that there has existed a publication seeking to pave the way towards a full appreciation of all the very many sides of film production and indeed the whole film world.

"Film Monthly Review" has introduced to its readers the men and women without whom no film could ever be made—the producers, the directors, the screen-writers, the editors, the designers, and the musicians. For it is on the combined skills of these people that the ultimate success of a film depends.

We have never had, and never will have, space for gossip about "your favourite film star." But that does not mean that we have imposed a ban on actors and actresses; on the contrary, bio-

graphies and pictures of both stars and small-part players have often appeared within our pages. But all of these artists have one thing in common—a very definite acting ability. And perhaps it is there, with its uncompromising insistence on genuine talent as the sole criterion, that "Film Monthly Review" differs from all other film periodicals.

But besides all this we have published articles on film-extras, exhibitors, distributors, censorship, cinemas specialising in foreign films, and dozens of other subjects never touched upon by the ordinary film magazine.

Also, the greater proportion of our space is devoted to the British film industry. We feel fully justified in this. British films, when good, can stand comparison with the best of any other nation. And if, by fostering the critical faculty in our readers, we are instrumental in forcing our producers to make good films more consistently, then we shall indeed feel that "Film Monthly Review" is serving a very useful purpose.

R.H.

Should Directors Edit and Cut their Own Films?

*To obtain artistic unity
one man should conceive
and write the story and
treatment, direct, edit and
cut the film—says:—*

L. B. DUCKWORTH

HITCHCOCK'S new film *Rope*, adapted from Patrick Hamilton's stage play of the same title, in which for the first time he has used the ten minute "take" technique, has had a rather mixed reception from those

critics whose notices I have seen, but I am not so much interested in the result, oddly enough, as in Hitchcock's reasons for adopting the method.

I do not know exactly what was in his mind, but my bet is that one reason at least was to avoid having his film cut and edited by someone else, as, presumably, would have been the case had the film been made with the conventional studio set up.

It is a curious coincidence that at the same time that *Rope* is made with this technique there should come news of another development which will also tend towards eliminating the cutter and editor. I mean the

independent frame device of David Rawnsley, who also wants to use the television instead of the movie camera, so that the director can see at the moment of shooting how the finished shot will look and can thus control the editing of the film while actually making it.

Is there any significance in these two moves, I wonder, other than the technical developments involved? Could this be an attempt to by-pass the recognised system under which directors do not control, or, in some cases, even supervise, the cutting of their own films? If so, it is extremely important.

(Continued overleaf)

The Russians taught us long ago that the final editing and cutting of a film could make or mar it, yet under the present set-up, in Hollywood at all events, this vital job is given to another person than the man who made the film!

How utterly crazy is the present system was shown in an extraordinarily interesting article recently written for the London *Star* by James Mason, now completing his first film in Hollywood. He gave the whole fantastic set-up—producers (in name, anyway) of all kinds, perhaps several directors, half a dozen or more writers (ten were employed on the story of Mason's first film) and heaven knows how many other technicians—cameramen, editors, cutters and what-have-you.

Mason revealed that four directors worked on Howard Hughes' *Vendetta*, and a variety also on *Gone With the Wind*, *Duel in the Sun* and *Desire Me*. In the case of the last film, they declined to have their names on the credit titles. William Wyler, one of the best directors in Hollywood, was not allowed to supervise the final cutting of *The Best Years of our Lives*.

"What has gone wrong in Hollywood," wrote Mason, "is that the producer has multiplied to such an alarming extent that the system is no longer efficient; it is like a freak with a hundred rudimentary heads." The position has not reached that degree of absurdity in England, but Mason

The "Case" of the Pillar-Box

The unit on location in Vienna with *The Third Man* have been busily learning German, with the result that Austrian helpers are being given instructions in a curious mixture of languages. This has inevitably produced some misunderstandings as for instance, when the assistant director asked an Austrian for two brief cases. The man looked puzzled but willing and a couple of hours later turned up on the site accompanied by a dozen hefty men staggering under the weight of two iron pillar boxes.

sees the danger. Indeed, it is very plain.

What should be done about it? I have long held a theory that the ideal film would be a one-man affair—one man conceiving and writing the story and treatment, directing the film and editing and cutting it. Perhaps it has often happened in smaller companies or units, but I doubt if it has ever been done in the big commercial studios, or, if it has, I must have missed it. Nor, you may say, is it ever likely to happen that you would find combined in one man all the necessary talents.

Well, let's look around and see who there is. To begin with, I think Hitchcock could do it if he were allowed to. (I wonder, by the way, if he has ever had complete—I repeat complete—freedom in any film he has ever made?) I think he has all the necessary qualifications. More than any other present-day director, in my opinion, he thinks in terms of moving pictures and sounds (not words), and that is as it should be for the modern film is much more an affair of visual and aural images than it is of literary ones.

What About Chaplin?

Incidentally, leaving on one side the big question of whether it is ever desirable to film stage plays—it would need another article to discuss the pros and cons of that—especially plays the action of which takes place entirely within four walls, Hitchcock is the last director I would ask to undertake the task, for his greatest gift, I think, is in conveying the sense of movement, which seems to me the very essence of film making.

Who else could make the one-man film? What about Chaplin? Indeed, I think he already has done it. I am not familiar with the detailed methods by which he works, but all his films have had the earmarks of a single creative mind at work. I think the late F. W. Murnau could have done it. I still regard *The Last Laugh* as the most perfect silent film ever made, because it was conceived and carried out in purely visual terms (as all silent films should have been and few were) and not a single title was required. In other words, to paraphrase a famous advertising slogan, every picture told a story.

I think Von Stroheim could have done it, though I should have hated

Star Plays Author

James Mason commenced work in Hollywood on the 1st December on the film version of his favourite novel *Madame Bovary*. His role is an unusual one, not in the actual book at all. Playing Flaubert, author of the French classic, he will act as commentator, and, speaking for the novelist, give his defence of the story. Mason will be scarcely seen in the picture, although his voice will be heard throughout. In March Mason expects to commence *Pandora* and the *Flying Dutchman* with Ava Gardner. Plans for his making of *Trilby* are being held up with leading lady trouble.

to foot the bill. His *Greed* was one of the great masterpieces of the silent era. Pudovkin could have done it—and what editing there was in his films! Robert Flaherty could do it. I have not yet seen his *Louisiana Story*, but his other films, from the famous *Nanook of the North* onwards, have shown that he has the necessary narrative and visual gifts. Orson Welles could do it, too. His *Citizen Kane* and *The Magnificent Ambersons* revealed a talent of a quite exceptional order, even though the public did not altogether appreciate some of the subtleties and quirks of his technique.

Well, there are some potential creators of my one-man film. No doubt readers will be able to suggest others. My point is that it is ridiculous that men like these (and there are others) should have their work altered in the cutting room. No doubt the cutter feels that he is a creative artist (in the same sense that a sub-editor is) and I am even willing to concede that there have probably been cutters who have salvaged from the mess a director has left them a see-able film, but generally speaking, I think the practice of permitting another man to cut and edit the film a director has conceived is pernicious. If the film is to have artistic unity the cutting, in my opinion, should be done by one man and one man only—the director.

Technical Advancement or Human Entertainment?

THE CINEMA'S AT THE CROSSROADS

THERE can be no question about it; the cinema is going through a crisis unprecedented in its short history. Once again, the wheel has turned a full circle. Twenty years ago Hollywood, which towards the end of the second great decade of the silent film had begun to feel the beginnings of public apathy, was saved by the timely advent of the talking picture. To-day, with cinema attendances everywhere falling off, Hollywood is hoping against hope for another miracle. But the only miracle in sight—television—looks, to Hollywood's apprehensive eye, like being the first nail in the coffin of the commercial cinema.

Development

The odd paradox about all this is that at a time when the American film is in decline, the once moribund British cinema, which flowered late, is at the very peak of its achievement. Elsewhere, too, there are far-reaching technical developments either in sight or already realised which may or may not change the shape of cinema as we know it. Developments in colour and stereoscopy, for instance: the German Agfacolor and the new and revolutionary French Rouxcolor, which is said to rival Technicolor in range and beauty, and is much cheaper besides. The Russians claim to have perfected stereoscopic movies, for long the dream of every film pioneer and inventor. What is certain, at any rate, is that "Robinson Crusoe," the first full-length stereoscopic film has already been shown on special screens in Moscow. Hollywood itself has probably reached the ultimate perfection in the technical processes of film making.

In England, the system known as independent frame is on trial at Pinewood. This is the invention of David Rawnsley. It means, roughly, the divorce of the frame or background of the picture from the performers. The setting is prefabricated to a high degree, with extensive use of back-

by **HARRY WILSON**

projection, miniatures and process photography. The actors work against a background of screens on which are thrown scenes photographed beforehand. It is, in a sense, back-projection in excelsis; a way of making films cheaply; but its great merit, as Rawnsley points out, is that it leaves the director free, during actual shooting, to concentrate not on the set, but on the players. There is much to be said for and against the system. Rawnsley claims that it will free directors and players from the tyranny of technique. Opponents of the method claim that it will stifle all creative imagination, and reduce film making, already by its very nature a necessarily scrappy and piecemeal process, to a dead and artificial thing.

At the same time Alfred Hitchcock has been trying out a process known as the "ten-minute" take, which means, in effect, that a film which under normal production methods would take anything up to two months to make, can now be done in a quarter of the time. I do not, however, share Hitchcock's characteristic optimism of the far-reaching implications of this idea. The difficulties involved are too great for universal application; and even if it were possible to extend its use to become general practice, the repercussions within the industry itself would be such as to make the upheaval which accompanied the changeover to sound seem as the merest ripple on the surface of tranquillity by comparison. Few actors—or directors, for that matter—would be up to the terrific effort of concentration required for such a feat.

Box-office Apathy

What, then, does all this portend? It means, in effect, that the millenium

in the purely mechanical perfection of film making has been reached. None of these ideas, revolutionary though some of them may be, will fundamentally alter the nature and being of cinema as we know it. It is difficult to see how it would be possible to go beyond this point of technical refinement. What conclusions are to be drawn from the present stalemate of ideas and box-office apathy which already has the film producers, in America, at any rate, in a state of alarm bordering on panic? Aldous Huxley, recently returned from California, has said that the American film industry is in a catastrophic state; wholesale dismissals of staff have taken place, certain studios closed altogether for the time being, and drastic retrenchment and reorganisation of production is inevitable. In fact, a widespread psychosis of defeat prevails.

Back to Basic Principles

It is clear, I think, that the cinema has reached a stage in its development as decisive as the arrival of sound just twenty years ago. All that remains is the superficial glitter of technical polish and artistry. Sophistication of ideas and technique have led to that atrophy of creation that the wise prophets in their isolation have been preaching these past fifteen years. Only now have the full implications of the short-sighted double-feature programme become apparent; only now has the sense of lost opportunity, the prodigal waste of talent, the reckless exhaustion of ideas and creative inspiration, been brought home vividly by the falling graph of attendances and returns.

Consequently, the cry everywhere is for a bold restatement of first principles, a reversion to primitive type; the Western, the comedy, the homespun story of simple sentiments and broad humanity. It is the cinema's first real crisis since the black days of 1938-39, when dwindling attendances first sounded the warning note. Then, the war intervened and

saved Hollywood from confronting the grisly spectre which stares it in the face to-day. Undoubtedly, the need now is to get back to the warmth of the human figure, for so long lost in the glitter of mechanical proficiency and soul-destroying technique. If independent frame or Mr. Hitchcock's ten-minute take or stereoscopy or, indeed, any of the modern miracles of science can restore to the cinema the universal common touch

possessed by Griffith, Chaplin (Charlie, not Monsieur Verdoux) or the early Disney—to name only three of its most considerable and unquestioned artists—then the cinema may survive to take on a fresh lease of life, may scale even greater heights of achievement in popular art.

Plainly, the cinema is at the cross-roads. One way leads to sanity, economic budgets, and a recovery of the lost illusion of make-believe. The

other direction leads to a cul-de-sac; a gradual decline in popularity and influence as audiences become increasingly disenchanted, to the status of a minority movement enjoying the support only of dilettante cine-aesthetes who believe the destiny of the cinema lies in abstractions divorced entirely from life. And that is a prospect sufficiently frightening to sober even the most sanguinary spirit.

A GREAT 'GUY' ON LIGHTING

— and Director of Photography

GREAT EXPECTATIONS was only the third film on which Guy Green had sole control of the lighting. Originally camera operator under Ronald Neame when he was director of photography in the early Cineguild films, *In Which We Serve* and *This Happy Breed*, Guy's first assignment as independent lighting cameraman was *The Way Ahead*, for which director Carol Reed had requested his services. By this time Ronald Neame had become a producer and Guy took his place as Director of Photography and lighting expert in the Cineguild team.

Guy followed his Oscar-winning work on *Great Expectations* with the second Dickens film, made under the Cineguild banner—*Oliver Twist*—which he photographed in an entirely different style. Whereas the camerawork on *Great Expectations* was executed with great precision on scientific lines, he has aimed at a much wider general effect in *Oliver Twist*, a very different subject with a tremendous impact of strongly contrasting backgrounds and characterisations. To achieve this he has broken away from the restrictions of scientific methods and used the camera to sweep the canvas of the picture with feeling and breadth.

Guy's Progress

Born in Somerset in 1913, Guy Green's interest in films was first expressed by his eagerness to work the school projector during the showings of silent educational films. From school he went straight into a company making advertising pictures.

Later he had his own portrait studio for a time before deciding to work his way to the top of cinematography. Starting as a focus-puller in 1933 he had many set-backs during the bad old days of the film slump before teaming up with Ronald Neame, then lighting cameraman, as camera operator on some exterior aerial sequences for a 20th Century Fox film entitled *A Yank in the R.A.F.*

This partnership was repeated with tremendous success on the Michael Powell film *One of Our Aircraft is*

Missing. When Noel Coward appointed David Lean and Ronald Neame as director and lighting-cameraman-cum-associate producer on his films, and the Cineguild company was formed, Guy Green joined them as camera operator. He had his opportunity to prove his flair for effective lighting in *The Way Ahead*, which established him as a film photographer with a big future.

In *The Passionate Friends* he has a subject totally different from the two Dickens films.



ON THE SET OF "THE PASSIONATE FRIENDS"

Guy Green, Lighting Expert and "Oscar" winner, chats to Claude Rains, who plays the part of the husband to Ann Todd.

A contributor returning from abroad writes about the

CONTINENTAL CINEMAS

EVERYWHERE I went on the Continent there were cinemas. The large towns had several each, the smallest village had one which functioned once, or perhaps twice, a week. And in the great majority of those cinemas, British or American films were showing.

It seemed to me that in the countries that I visited this year, France, Switzerland, Italy, Luxembourg and Belgium, the policy concerning cinemas, and films, was quite different from our own. In this way. In England, no small village has its own cinema. The potential audience either goes to the nearest town, or if that is too far, goes without. People in this country have a "palais" taste in cinemas. They expect large buildings with lots of gold paint and velvet curtains for which they innocently pay each time they settle into their plush seats. In a word, they want what they have come to regard as glamour. Furthermore, they want new films.

Now, on the Continent, they make no such demands. Of course in the large towns they have their quota of glamour just as we have, even more so. But in the isolated villages of France and Italy the cinemas are dilapidated halls, ex-warehouses, ex-chapels or what you will, and the films are years old. I feel sure that if similar places of entertainment were opened in England they would close again almost immediately—which doubtless accounts for their not being opened.

This might be explained by the fact that no English village can ever be as isolated as, say, an Italian. The country is too small. But this explanation does not hold water, because in Azzate, for instance, there is a curious once-weekly cinema, but the village is only twenty minutes by tram from Varese, which is a flourishing town with its full complement of cinemas.

On the other hand, in Switzerland where, I should say, the general standard of culture is considerably higher than in northern Italy, the somewhat prehistoric cinema is still to be found in places with quite an

appreciable population. In one such place, about an hour's train journey from Montreux; too big to be called a village and too small for a town, but containing, among other things, two large hotels, there is a cinema which gives two performances twice weekly.

This is a small stucco building devoid of even the simplest ornamentation. The seats are wooden and as uncomfortable as you would expect; the floor is covered with coconut matting, and is as cold as you would expect. There is only one projector so that there is a pause between each reel, and at half-time there is an interval of ten minutes, during which you can go outside to smoke if you wish, since smoking in the auditorium is forbidden. But outside means outside. The entrance hall is minute and will not hold anything like the number of people who do want to smoke. In fact, a cinema like it would not be

by FRANCES HOWELL

tolerated in England longer than it would take the people to pass round an opinion.

So we find this curious state of affairs. The country people are, presumably, so interested in films that they will support the most primitive type of cinema, and yet the first feature films they see are so old and the second feature so bad. About the most up-to-date film I came across in my wanderings was *The Man Within*, known as the *Contrabandisti*. More usually it was *Le Coeur Captif*, *La Dame aux Deux Visages*, which you may or may not recognise as *Ninotchka*, and *Sang e Arena* which seemed to be a great favourite in Italy, where lurid posters for it were to be seen in every small town and village.

The prices of seats in these cinemas are naturally a great deal cheaper than in ours. They would need to be. But in the larger towns, where the cinemas are presentable and the films reasonably modern, they are still cheaper than ours. In Verdun, for example,

where two odeonesque cinemas practically face each other, the most expensive seat, a *loge* was 60 francs. At our rate of exchange that is very little indeed; but even when you consider that the smart hotels nearby charge 60 francs for a bath, it still rates the cinema prices pretty low.

It struck me while I was away this time that the cinema has become a great international interest, the more so, perhaps, because people of different nations can discuss a film and have in mind exactly the same thing. With books there is always the translation to take into consideration; with plays the production. But a film is the same film all the world over, with the same cast and no language barrier.

It also seemed to me that Italy, anyway, is a glaring example of a prophet not being honoured in his own country. I saw hardly any Italian films advertised, and in conversation people seemed a little astonished that we should think so well of their films. They smiled in a deprecating manner, as though they thought we were merely being kind, and turned the conversation back to British films. And some of them appeared a little flummoxed by the growing-up of British films. I felt that for them the cinema had ceased to be the simple narcotic entertainment of old, and they no longer knew what to make of it.

Perhaps the most curious reaction towards films that I encountered came from a man in Brussels. He seldom visited the cinema, yet considered himself wholly qualified to criticise whatever he saw. As far as I could make out he despised the films he secretly enjoyed and resented the fact that he could not appreciate such films as *Great Expectations*, which bored him. Eventually it transpired that he never liked to see film stars more than once because they were engraved on his mind in the parts they played when he first saw them. Any subsequent appearance seemed to him unnatural and unreal—which is quite a new thought for the publicity boys.

NEW MASTERS FOR OLD

by J. W. Booth

RING out the old, ring in the new. Such is the way of everyday existence, in every walk of life, even in Hollywood, that fabulous capital of the world of movie make-believe. For not even the great ones of the cinema can withstand the inevitable passage of the years.

The recent passing of both D. W. Griffith and Ernst Lubitsch not only left the American film colony—and indeed the entire film world—so very much the poorer; but it also served to remind us of the lamentable fact we are all too apt to overlook . . . That the first generation of the cinema cannot endure for ever.

Indeed, so intense is the process of genuine creation through the medium of the film that it would seem that the life expectancy of its practitioners cannot be high. Lubitsch died at the age of 56 and Griffith at 68 (although the latter had been comparatively inactive since the coming of sound); whilst, in the U.S.S.R., the great Russian director, Sergei Eisenstein, was only 50 when he, too, recently passed away.

Elia Kazan

Perhaps this imminent approach to the end of an era has contributed its quota towards the flagging standards of present-day American film production.

Is new blood the vital need to re-awaken the energies of the vast American production system, to give back to film-making that zest and spirit of adventure of the early pioneering days?

If so, the nucleus of such a healthy second generation is already there, already tried and tested and not found wanting.

High among these directors of today, in whose hands the future of American films must rest, surely stands Elia Kazan; the winner of an Academy Award, at the age of 39, for *Gentleman's Agreement* (his fourth feature film).

Who is there to take the place of the Old Masters like Ernst Lubitsch and D. W. Griffith? J. W. Booth selects Elia Kazan and John Huston and tells how they have already proved their worth as outstanding directors of American films.

This seemingly rapid rise to fame actually is belied by the story of the years spent working and waiting for the opportunities that finally came his way. "Gadget" was the nickname he got as he painted signs and did odd jobs of typing, whilst he learned his craft with the American Group Theatre. How apt an apprentice he had been, with that serious approach to his work that is the hallmark of all Group members, was eventually proved when he directed such top-line Broadway successes as "The Skin Of Our Teeth" and "Jacobowsky And The Colonel."

Just as on the stage, acting was his first stepping stone to success in Hollywood, where, during a twelve-week stay, he made appearances in *Blues in the Night* and *City for Conquest*.

In Hollywood, however, nothing ever succeeds as much as success itself, and so, consequent upon his New York triumphs, Kazan was back there directing his first feature film, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. This was a story that greatly appealed to him, and he brought it to the screen with such sincerity and intensity of feeling that it wore the very ring of truth.

His next film, *Sea of Grass*, although giving him full scope to demonstrate his mastery of the cinematic medium, yet lacked opportunities for the interpretation of universal experience, which is Kazan's greatest gift.

Boomerang, however, had this quality; indeed, based on fact and treated in the fictional-documentary style, it was life itself, not as seen through the myopic, rose-tinted vision of Hollywood, but through the clear, penetrating eyes of its producer, Louis de Rochemont. In Kazan he found the ideal director for his cause—serious-minded, self-effacing as regards technique and a true craftsman of the cinema.

The "Oscar" on his mantelshelf, as a result of *Gentleman's Agreement*, is certainly no more than Elia Kazan deserves; for he is a director who seeks, not only to entertain, but to stimulate, and that is the quality most lacking in American films of to-day.

A zest for living has always been the common link between the films typical of both the Fairbanks, father and son. Now the rare, if not unique, position of the two Dougs in the annals of film history is being rivalled by the two generations of another film family, the Hustons—Water, the father, and John, the son.

John Huston

Huston Senior needs no introduction, for he has been acting for the screen over the past twenty years. So it was only natural that his son should follow in his footsteps to the stage; but John, with one brief career as a professional boxer already behind him, decided that acting was not for him, and enlisted in the Mexican Army.

In less than two years he rose to the rank of lieutenant, but then, at the age of 21, he retired and started writing. This marked the turning point of his life, for it eventually brought him to Hollywood and close contact with the director, William Wyler, whose pupil Huston readily admits to having been.

For the next two or three years he studied the techniques of motion pictures, whilst collaborating on the screenplays of such films as *The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse*, *Juarez*

and *Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet*. Then, in 1941, he was assigned to direct *The Maltese Falcon* from his own script.

The *Falcon* speedily claimed a place amongst the best films of this decade, with Huston, in the powerful dual capacity of writer-director, stamping his personality across every foot of it. Never hesitating to use a new approach, yet never descending into the shallow trickery of technique for technique's sake, this was screen story-telling in its finest tradition, forceful pictorial narration.

Huston's intense feeling for the visual aspect of the medium scarcely had been confirmed by his next two productions, the Bette Davis' film,

In This Our Life, and the Bogart spy-thriller, *Across the Pacific*, when the entry of the U.S.A. into the Second World War interrupted his highly promising career.

He was, however, still able to carry on making films whilst in the army. The general excellence of these shorts and documentaries was quickly established by the early *Report From The Aleutians*. Four and a half years later he returned to civilian life to make the film he had long wanted to make—*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

Written and directed by Huston, from the novel by B. Traven, this, too, appears destined to take its place alongside the earlier *Falcon* amongst

the films which will never be forgotten. For it has, far beyond its technical excellence, a deeper significance, a message to all people for all time.

Elia Kazan and John Huston, then, each with only four commercial feature productions at present to their credit, are to-day the outstanding representatives of Hollywood's younger generation of film-makers. But there are others also... Dmytryk and Dassin, Montgomery and Minnelli, all adventurous spirits seeking to burst the bonds of commercialism, to widen the scope of the screen. The story of these other new masters must be told another time.

Screen Journalism

its vital importance in Documentary Films

UNHERALDED, and so far unsung, a minor revolution is taking place in sections of the British documentary film industry. At one time all the sins of feature production were reproduced in miniature in the documentary field, involving delay and subsequent chaos. The situation was aggravated by the bureaucracy of sponsors, whether governmental or trade organisation, and there was many a slip 'twixt the script and the strip. Units collapsed under the weight of inertia. Personnel became used to sitting around discussing theory and policy; the wrong type of people were often attracted to the industry. As a result the end products were frequently inadequate and sometimes palpably bad. Documentary began to lose its high place in the annals of British film history.

Government Films

The position is by no means universally improved but some notable advances have been made. The Coal Board's monthly Film Magazine made by Data Films, is an example. It is a one-reel affair that is given theatrical showing in the mining areas. It is solely concerned with aspects of the mining industry, but in practice this becomes a wide field, including

such varied items as a progress report on the manufacture of rubber belting for mining plant, the story of a recruit, the mass release of fifteen hundred pigeons or the record of a rescue competition.

Such items have usually to be covered in a quarter of a reel, so that there would be some excuse if the result were pedestrian and undramatic, with no more tension than a news reel. It would be understandable, too, if the product was a magazine only in a very limited sense, lacking the topicality of journalism because of the delays normally associated with film making and the need to obtain the assent of Government departments on script and dialogue.

Such difficulties are gradually being worn down by the super-human efforts of alert technicians and directors determined to do a good job. On the count of speed, for instance, it is not unknown for the unit to be put on to a story that has to be investigated, scripted, shot and edited within thirty-six hours, and often under the most difficult conditions.

It might be assumed that such efforts would inevitably result in an unimaginative hotch-potch with bad camera work and mechanical editing.

But that is by no means the case. These journalistic efforts, even within their minute range, have a beginning, a middle and an end. They are shot dramatically, having tension and shape. Another important feature is that those responsible have corrected the tendency, which has marred some documentary production, of working from a generalised propaganda angle, from invented situations and external approach. They now start from a case history, a human episode, an actual event; a humanistic approach that tells its own story without official underlining. In short, it is the best type of inspired journalism with the art concealed, avoiding the sin of condescension and the self-conscious striving after popularity.

Effective Propaganda

The acid test of this achievement is that these film magazines are welcomed in the mining areas. Badly made films have in the past been hooted off the screen by these critical audiences. A great deal of positive harm was done by such superficial efforts and some of them were judiciously mislaid by the authorities concerned. Now the situation has changed considerably. The authorities are getting a coverage much greater than by, say, press advertising for a comparable cost, and the propaganda value, since the point is made obliquely in reportage form, is much more effective. And the lessons are important for the makers of documentary films.

On Location and on the Set with

"THE PASSIONATE FRIENDS"



The gay, smiling Ann Todd, for once in a serious mood, listens attentively to David Lean as he goes through a passage in the script before shooting the bathroom scene in the film "The Passionate Friends."



In the film Ann Todd attempts to commit suicide, by falling beneath an Underground train. While working on the set she and David Lean pause to welcome and share a joke with J. Arthur Rank.

"The Passionate Friends" is based on the novel of the same title by H. G. Wells published in 1913. Eric Ambler wrote the screen play, adaptation by Stanley Haynes and director David Lean, with Ronald Neame producing. Their collaboration has produced a screen play combining excellent dialogue with the vibrant emotional situations so vividly described by Wells.

Mary Justin (Ann Todd) a woman who married for security meets an old love Steven Stratton (Trevor Howard) and finds that the bonds of sympathy and attraction between them, are stronger than ever. A love affair follows which becomes known to her husband Howard Justin (Claude Rains). Still preferring security to possessive love she turns her back on romance and is forgiven by her husband on the understanding that the past becomes a closed book.

The lovers meet again by sheer coincidence nine years later. Circumstantial evidence against them is so strong that the husband starts immediate divorce proceedings. The one-time passionate friends find themselves paying the penalty for their past loves and the total disruption of three lives is saved only by the husband's sudden realisation of the great mistake he is making.





Tired out, but still looking beautiful, Ann Todd, after climbing the glacier slopes of the Mer de Glace, near Chamonix, in the French Alps, while on location, relaxes as one of the Alpine guides unlaces her boots for her.



A gay scene from the film. On the waters of Lac d'Annecy in France, Ann Todd and Trevor Howard wave to people on board a steamer, from their motor-boat. Acting the part of the boatman is David Lean, who took over the role as well as directing the scenes for "The Passionate Friends."



Ann Todd and Trevor Howard lunch at a London club. The head waiter, Mr. Williams, on the left, and the wine waiter, who are serving them, were both chosen to play in the film by David Lean, the Director, who dines regularly at their fashionable London restaurant.

APPRECIATION OF THE FILM

Three articles discussing the judgment of screen presentations by the professional critics and the ardent amateurs who are members of film societies.

YOU AND THE CRITICS

HOW many times have you been to see a film having read excellent reviews of it and then been bitterly disappointed? How many times on the other hand, have you found yourself inside a cinema—owing perhaps to its “being warmer inside”—enjoying a film which has been universally condemned by the Critics?

The Critics Fault

Unless you are one of those people who hasn't-been-to-a-film-in-eight-months, both experiences have probably happened to you quite often. Does that mean you have poor taste or that you are not one of the “masses” for whom most films are made? Is it perhaps the fault of the Critic, or is it impossible to judge whether you will enjoy a film by the reviews?

There is no doubt that a number of Critics nowadays write their column more with an eye to entertaining readers than to reviewing seriously the picture. It may be the paper shortage that has led to the two line review, which you no doubt have read. For instance, a film is shown called *As You Love Me*; the next morning, you read in the paper the Critic's review which is simply “As I don't.” You are perhaps amused, but are you any the wiser as to what the film is about or as to why the Critic “doesn't”? The man who made the film has no idea as to why he has been so dismissed.

Personal Opinions

If you went to a film in the role of a Critic, would you write down your personal opinions of the film; try and be clever with a two line review; or would you try and explain why the

by
BRIAN MONTAGU

film you had seen did, or did not attain the standard needed for that particular type of film?

If you are a writer it is not difficult to write down your personal opinions about a film which you have enjoyed. It is also easy to be sarcastic and curt about the one you disliked. But that is not the real job of the Critic. He must praise the film he has disliked intensely if it is considered by him to be good of its type.

Influenced Reviews

There are one or two Critics to-day who are worthy of the title, but they are called highbrow and only read by the few. On the other hand there are too many who treat their weekly column as a vehicle for voicing their personal tastes, not only in films, but also in personalities.

The life of a film Critic is hard and unenviable, if taken seriously—but surely, he could influence, instruct and guide the cinemagoer if he so chose, rather than itemise his personal likes and dislikes.

You must realise, however, that the Critic sees many more films than you do. He starts his cinema-going at 10 a.m. The cinema is cold. The audience is composed of fellow Critics and specially invited important people. Also there are those who were given tickets by the very important people who were unable to come themselves. The auditorium is half full and the audience unresponsive. The Critic might have slept

badly or be seeing the film after too good a dinner given him by the producers to put him in a good mood.

The review he publishes may therefore be influenced by a number of factors. Apart from those above, he may have had a week of seeing really bad pictures. Can he be blamed for overpraising the one fairly good one?

It would be interesting to form a Board of Critics composed of five or six professional critics and two ordinary cinemagoers. This Board would see a film at the invitation of the producers during its Premier Run. They would see it when they were not wearied by other trade shows and in a cinema, where the rest of the audience was the ordinary paying public. Later the Board would discuss the film and publish a full unbiased criticism. This review would cover every possible angle, including audience reaction.

Appeal to the Masses

If a film were given such criticism, it is felt that not only would the producers benefit, but the cinemagoer might also begin to understand the ideals of the cinema.

All publicity is good publicity as far as the cinemas are concerned. The managers do not care if they get good or bad reviews as long as they get publicity. A picture condemned as vulgar and sadistic by the critics will prove a box office sensation.

A film review in the trade journals is often prefaced with the phrase “Will appeal to the masses.” A cinema manager will often book this type of film; he is interested in filling his theatre. The “masses” are supposed to have a very low standard

and not to appreciate anything that is "different." This is perhaps due to their having been starved of this type of entertainment and only given what is supposed to appeal to them. If a critic would try a little "education" and tell them why they might like a certain picture that is "different"—this state of affairs might change.

The best method to discover whether you agree with the critics is to read their reviews after you have seen the film. The results are some-

times astonishing. You will probably end by taking the advice of one critic on Comedies, another on Dramas and Musicals and still another on Foreign Films. You may learn, however, to whom you should refer as to what you should see.

You have one other source of information besides the National Press and that is the Film Magazines which are now being published. Some of these are more interested in film stars than in the films themselves, but

others do publish really good unbiased film reviews.

The only way by which producers will realise the type of film really appreciated by the public is by box office receipts; it is hoped therefore that you will try and be guided as to what you should see and that your "guides" or film critics will be worthy of your trust. Remember the all important person to the film industry is the cinemagoer of the "masses," in fact, YOU.

The Battle Between Screen Hypnotism and Screen Criticism

THROUGH the short night of film history, an acidulous battle has been raging on two connected planes. On the aesthetic plane, polite guns have been fired on the subject of good and bad cinema in terms of pure visual art. The battle is fought according to the conventions. On the other front, is the battle for the public's pulse and attention.

The Fur Begins to Fly

The chief antagonists have been and still are, the producers and exhibitors of films and the film critics. If the gulf of opinion to-day is as wide as it has ever been, and certainly more acrimonious, this does not signify that no points of general agreement have been evolved. On neither side, for example, would any protagonist be found to put forward an argument in support of film stories being anything other than simple and unambiguous. Whatever can be converted from novels and plays into film, the innuendoes of thought processes, the subtleties of indetermined character are debarred. No less a name than Hitchcock has experimented with subtlety and declared it lost to its audience. On this issue, all is at peace.

Where the gloves come off and the fur begins to fly, is in the fight for the hypnotised soul of the vast bulk of our weekly cinemagoers—burdened with an uncritical tolerance. Ranged on one side is a compact body of film critics—lovers of the cinema, possessors of an integrity of judgment—seconded by a small but

by
PAUL NUGAT

growing body of discerning lay critics. These lay critics have been recruited from the widening circles of film societies, which while still regarding the cinema as a place of entertainment, are feeling their way forward from the appreciation of the best of the past to a more balanced assessment of what is worth while or mediocre in the present. This body has marshalled sufficient numbers to its ranks to justify the professional critics in thinking that the long fight for better cinema is no longer being fought in isolation. It is no surprise, therefore, that the moguls of our film empires are beginning to think aloud. But the business of thinking aloud is less due to vocal expression in opposition to our weekly film fare, than to the visible decline in box-office takings. Consequently, most frequently voiced jibe against the critics is, "you are out of touch with cinema audiences." If this were so, our producers and exhibitors would not be worrying the way they are.

Who is the Star?

Newspapers have never mesmerised the readership in the way a dark hall and bright screen have. Furthermore it is a fact that the bulk of newspaper readers only read film reviews in order to find out who the stars are, and the kind of role they

are playing. Many film makers believe, that, because this is so, the critic who deflates a film, is rendering a disservice to the community by warning them off.

No Easy Task

The question that every reputable film critic has to ask himself is: Is an honest critic to bow to the low standards of cinematic appreciation, or is it his function to elevate popular taste? The critics, worthy of the name, have long given their own answer. Apart from filling their weekly columns with their opinions, good, bad, and indifferent, of every film that is made, they attend film societies, lecture to schools, and talk on the Air. Their task is not easy. Although they preach selection to their listeners, they cannot practice it themselves. Blasé? No, that is not the trouble with a conscientious critic. His difficulty is to maintain his standard of values, without which he would be no better equipped for the task of giving a fair appreciation than anybody else.

Values are, in fact, the crux of the issue. They are the gulf that separates him from the hard core of habit-going fans. They are the gulf that film societies seek to bridge by showing international films, the discussion that arises out of them, the standards of taste formed by them. Some people suppose that critics understand the techniques of film production. They have a rudimentary grasp of the essentials, such as can be found in any of the better

text-books on the cinema. But they realise that their observations would not be more profound for a greater awareness of every trick device ever employed. Nor would it bring them nearer to the film makers' interpretation of that phrase: People want to be taken out of themselves. To the less socially conscious film maker, the world is less hard if the drabness of daily life and surroundings can be submerged for the length of the programme. The film critic demands

something more for his public. He wants the cinemagoer to take something away with him—to go home feeling richer and more ennobled for the experience.

Who is right? I cannot give a collective answer. The public, that large word meaning nothing, has never been able to formulate its wants. The film industry has proved that it can be fed anything. It has survived spates of Romance, Horror, Excitement, Gangsterdom, as well as

the moving dramas of the war films. It has taken films as it takes its rations as part of the household expenditure. If it is really tired of its film diet, it will have to learn to withhold its shillings from the box-office.

In the meantime, the minority opinion, developing out of our film societies, will have to become more vocal. They must create the illusion that they are speaking for thirty odd millions.

THEY JUDGE FOR PLEASURE

I HAVE just been reading a little publication called "Flashback," recently issued by Birmingham Film Society to commemorate its 100th show. It was sent to me by a member of the committee "with the Society's compliments in recognition of much friendly and fraternal interest."

That took my mind back to a Saturday morning in January, 1931, when, with two other people, I sat in a cold and poky Birmingham cinema and watched while the projectionist ran through (to see if it would stand the strain) what was then believed to be the only copy in existence of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*.

AIR-BORNE MESSENGER

Helicopters are becoming a routine aid to film production. Warner Bros. Pictures, having recently used one for *Johnny Belinda*, starring Jane Wyman and Lew Ayres, are again employing such a 'plane for *Task Force*, starring Gary Cooper. For *Johnny Belinda*, a cameraman boarded the helicopter to get aerial shots of Nova Scotia and California. On the *Task Force* assignment, however, the aeroplane is merely a messenger: it carries exposed film from the U.S.N. *Antietam* at sea, aboard which a unit is working, to the Naval Air Station, San Diego. The film is then sent by air express to the Warner Bros. studios at Burbank, California.

by

LESLIE BLAKE

That was a rehearsal for the first show ever given by the Birmingham Film Society, the oldest in the Provinces except for that at Leicester, founded a year before. The Hampton, now no more, was the only cinema in the city which would accommodate those rather queer people who wanted to see the films of other countries except their own, especially Russia. That alone made us more than a trifle suspect, as this bit of dialogue from the court hearing for the application of a licence for Sunday performances showed:—

"No film, he added, would be shown unless passed by the British Board of Film Censors.

The Chairman (Mr. S. E. Short): If there are any exceptions will they be submitted to the Justices for approval?—Yes.

Alderman Lovsey: Have any of these films been taken and disseminated under the auspices of the Soviet Government?—Not one.

Alderman Lovsey: I am very glad to hear it."

Paul Rotha was there at the first meeting, the cinema owner's son was the projectionist (we weren't allowed to pay anyone) and we had an orchestra of five musicians, all of whom had lost their jobs through the "talkies." (Other sound effects came from the trains in the G.W.R. tunnel which passed under the cinema.) John Stone, who recruited and conducted the orchestra, was one of the men who sat with me in the cinema that Saturday morning. The other was

Stanley Hawes, the Society's secretary for the first four years and now producer-in-chief to the Australian National Film Board and Department of Information. I, a critic bored to death with Hollywood banalities, was just an observer and sympathiser.

What Films We Saw!

It was touch and go during the first few seasons, with a membership (out of a city with a million population) of first 370, then 240 and next 463, but what films we saw! Every show was a great adventure. They were a revelation to most of us—Dovjenko's *Earth* (I can still see the close-up of shimmering rain drops on apples dappled by moonlight), Eisenstein's *The General Line* and the drama of *Turksib*; Germany's *The Student of Prague* (did Veidt ever make a better film?) and *Faust*; France's *La Passion de Jeanne D'Arc* (I shall never forget Dreyer's close-ups, like oil paintings), *Le Million* and *Les Nouveaux Messieurs*; America's *Hallelujah* (King Vidor could make a film) and the lovely, dreamy *White Shadows in the South Seas*; our own Grierson's *Drifters*, the pioneer of all the documentaries, and Anthony Asquith's *A Cottage on Dartmoor*, of which, I was glad to see in the September-October "Film Monthly Review," he is still as proud as of any film he has ever made.

They were great days. We felt that, at last, we were getting somewhere in cinema, that the film could really be an art. I was inspired to found a similar society in the neighbouring town of Wolverhampton where I lived and worked. We began bravely, but hopelessly as it

turned out. To begin with, Sunday shows of any kind were barred and we could not persuade the justices to change their minds. We could get only a suburban cinema, a long way out from the centre of the town, to let us have the hall for a week night once a month. It was difficult to get the films we wanted and when we had booked them we could never be sure that they would arrive—and sometimes they didn't.

The Perfect Documentary

Nevertheless, in the first season we showed Ekk's *The Road to Life*, about the homeless boys of Moscow; *The Emperor Jones*, with Paul Robeson; Elizabeth Bergner's *Dreaming Lips*; Noel Coward's first film venture, *The Scoundrel*; and, most controversial of all, *Zero de Conduite*. That caused some arguments, believe me. In fact, it nearly disrupted the Society, but most of us stuck to our guns, arguing that unless we showed films of this and every kind there wasn't much point in running a Society.

That first season we had 335 members paying 10s. 6d. each for six shows and we finished with a balance of £3 14s. 1d.! The next season we gave our members Pabst's *Don Quixote*; Sacha Guitry in *Bonne Chance* and *The Student of Prague*, not to mention such documentaries as *Housing Problems*, *Diet and Nutrition* and *Coal Face* with W. H. Auden's verse commentary. We were very strong on documentaries!

Membership dropped to 250, but we carried on, showing *Lac Aux Dames* and *Merlusse* from France; *Riders to the Sea* from Synge's play; that early silent classic, *The Great Train Robbery*; *La Kermesse Heroique* and other documentaries, including Rotha's *To-day We Live* and, at a special G.P.O. Film Unit show, *Night Mail*, which I still think the perfect documentary.

That was our last fling, however. The Society came to an end in February, 1938, and our only consolation afterwards was the thought that the war would probably have killed it anyway. Now, following the building of Wolverhampton's Civic Hall, a new film society has been born in the town. It has a membership of 700—and there's a waiting list. That's what having a good hall can do for you!

In an article I contributed recently

to the Civic Hall's quarterly magazine I wrote this:—

"The functions of a film society have changed a good deal since the early days when to be able to show a foreign film—almost any foreign film—alone seemed sufficient reason for its existence. But the filmgoer has, we hope, learned a little since then. A foreign film, once a very strange beast to him, is now no longer quite, shall we say, so foreign because even the commercial cinemas, which at one time would not have touched one with a bargepole, now show them quite frequently."

Therein lies, I think, the justification of film societies, if they need any justification. London, founded in 1925, Glasgow in 1929, Edinburgh in 1930, Birmingham in 1931—these were the pioneers which paved the way for all the others, I don't know how many, which followed after. And they paved the way, too, I think, for such specialist cinemas as the Academy (started in 1930 and still flourishing, I am glad to see), the Everyman, Hampstead (1933), the Curzon (1934), Studio One (1936) and now La Continentale and the Berkeley.

Improved Public Taste

What the film societies and the specialist cinemas have done in widening the horizons of filmgoers and sharpening their appreciation cannot be computed in statistics, or in pounds, shillings and pence. Their influence is incalculable. For instance, Birmingham can proudly claim—and I don't suppose it is unique in this among film societies—to have given a showing (almost always the first, usually the only showing in Birmingham) to every first class film, not already commercially shown in the neighbourhood, which could possibly be obtained and legally be shown. Who can estimate what good that has done?

And does anyone imagine that some of the more intelligent films the commercial studios have turned out in recent years would ever have been contemplated had it not been believed that public taste had improved? For that improvement—and I don't think anyone would argue that it has not improved—the film societies and the specialist cinemas must take most of the credit. May they go on being pioneers.

FILM MONTHLY REVIEW ANNUAL 1948

Containing a collection of articles and numerous pictures which have appeared in the monthly issues of Film Monthly Review.

Dedicated to all who had any part in the making of the films *Hamlet*, *Oliver Twist*, *The Red Shoes*, and *The Winslow Boy*. It is intended as an appreciation of their work and as an acknowledgment and souvenir of the many fine films in addition to those mentioned, that have been made by the British film industry during the year 1948.

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Foreign Films

by a
Correspondent

Scandinavians to Make Nansen Film

The three Scandinavian countries, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, are jointly to make a film based on the life of Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, the famous Norwegian explorer, humanitarian, and author of the "Nansen Passport" for stateless refugees. Style similar to that employed in *Scott of the Antarctic*, is to be used for the making of the film and actors from all three countries are to participate in what is hailed as a "film that will be best able to carry Nansen's ever-topical message to a world which is still suffering want and anxiety." Details of the film are at present being discussed with Odd Nansen, the late explorer's son. Production date has not yet been fixed.

Korda Makes a Deal

HEARTY pat on the back for the new year should go to Sir Alexander Korda for the initiative he has shown in obtaining for distribution here, three Czech short films and a Polish feature film. The shorts are: *Baroque Prague*, about the beautiful architecture of Czechoslovakia's capital, and *Toyland Revolt*, and *Lullaby*, both of which are puppets with live actors.

The Polish film, *The Last Stage*, made by Poland's only woman film director, Wanda Jacobowska, is a harrowing realistic picture of life in the dreaded Auschwitz concentration camp. Jacobowska, who was herself incarcerated in Auschwitz, has infused her own experiences into the picture. While in the concentration camp she actually planned the picture. The acting is of a very high standard. The actors had to relive the life of the camp before shooting commenced. It will be interesting to see if the Censor will demand any cuts.

Another German Film

In dubbing stages at present is *Marriage in the Shadow*, which the Curzon is due to present in the early part of this year. This German film was made in the recently established DEFA Studios of the Soviet Zone of Berlin by well-known German film director Kurt Maetzig. There are some very brutal shots of Nazis smashing the windows of Jewish shops during the anti-Semitic barbarities of the middle thirties. The story tells of the love of a non-Jewish actor for a young Jewess. It is a tragedy built on the reality of many thousands of such tragedies which now are so easily forgotten or dismissed from mind.

Personal Appearance Here of Anna Magnani

London may have the opportunity early this year of seeing in person Italy's number one actress, Anna Magnani. She has been invited to appear at the same time as her film

Angelina M.P. is screened at the Academy Cinema. She was to have arrived this month (January) but *Paisa* is still packing the Academy and the date for the release of *Angelina M.P.* has been postponed for about a month to six weeks. If you have enjoyed her previous films, as I am sure you have, then now's your chance to show your appreciation.

In a Few Lines...

Australian film production is to commence in earnest this year. Be prepared for Australian rancher films.

* * *

Inspiring Soviet film, *The Young Guard*, based on Fadeyev's best selling novel of the same name, is now in London. It might get a general distribution.

* * *

South Africa is planning a series of films in the Afrikaner language.

LIFE IN DENMARK

"Documentary in Denmark 1940-1948" is the title of an impressive catalogue just published by the Danish Central Film Library in English. One hundred films about Danish life are listed against the changing background of the last eight years of war, occupation, liberation and peace. Attractively presented with plenty of stills as well as informative detail, the catalogue is well worth looking at.

In an introduction Arthur Elton has paid tribute to the achievements of the movement which made these films possible. The effective growth of the Danish documentary group dates from 1940 and the German invasion. Over the subsequent years it did a great deal to keep alive the country's traditions and way of living. At the end of the war, the movement emerged, confident and skilled. It had produced many films it could be proud of, and it had made its own particular contribution to documentary film-making. It had brought in wit and humour and a warm sense of life. The pity is that relatively so few of these films have been made available in Britain, apart from festival performances. This is one of the directions in which this catalogue should be of positive value.

A further publication, "Motion Pictures in Denmark" by Ebbe Neergaard, the director of the Danish Central Film Library, has also just appeared in English. It gives a clear and readable picture of the Danish cinema business with particular reference to the production and exhibition of documentary films.

ART OR INDUSTRY?

by Peter Lewis

I HAVE just turned out the box room. Apart from this being a great achievement in itself, I discovered a most interesting collection of pre-war film magazines. A number of them have passed into oblivion, as have the films they describe. Some of them are published to-day though very much thinner owing to rationing! Let me name a few in order to conjure up the atmosphere of days gone by: "Cinema Quarterly," "Sight and Sound," "Royal Film Supplement," "Film Art," "Cinema Arts," and, of course, "The Picturegoer," "The Cinema" and "The Kine Weekly."

It was most intriguing, on turning over the pages of these magazines to discover how many Stars of To-day were also stars of yesteryear. It was harrowing to see the changes the years have brought to some of them and still more astonishing to find that the "Starlets" and "Stars of the Future" so attractively photographed in their bathing costumes have never even twinkled let alone shone during the succeeding years. Even more harrowing to read the great names which have completely vanished from the screen to-day.

In the Trade Papers I noticed that there were an astonishing number of "Best Films of the Year" of which I had hardly heard and which certainly have never been revived by my local cinema.

In what used to be called the "Avantgarde Magazines" I read of many films of which I have often heard spoken, sometimes even in hushed voices. Some of these are revived either by Film Societies or smaller more specialised cinemas. Others, however, are still locked away in the vaults of the British Film Institute.

Amongst these old magazines I think I have discovered the answer to the age old question "Is the Cinema an Art or an Industry?"

Should the cinema, like industry, progress in efficiency and technique, making each film obsolete as its successor is produced, or should every film be such a masterpiece that it will survive the years as a work of art?

In Industry there is always progress towards a more perfect object, a more perfect design which will make its predecessor obsolete and a mere object of curiosity. In Art the value should be everlasting.

The old commercial film with its stars and its up to the minute story based on some passing craze soon appears obsolete. But there are some films which have been produced with a perfect understanding which do not seem dated to-day even though photography and film stock have improved a hundredfold. They still seem entertaining, interesting, and what is more, beautiful.

It is a pity that some of these films are not revived more often. I do not mean the Continental Film or the one which is referred to by the trade papers as "limited appeal to the more discriminating" but the real box office attractions of the past.

When the dollar crisis arose, I thought we might have an opportunity of seeing some of these films. But then I realised a rather important factor in this question of revivals. The large Companies in Hollywood turn out in their factory a certain number of films each year, and realise the amount of screen showing time they have at their disposal throughout the world. If during this period of crisis they had found that the revived films had once

again proved box office successes they would not have had a market for their new products. Therefore even if Revivals were successful the effect on the Industry would be disastrous. The Dollar Crisis was too shortlived and we were soon flooded with the latest "Star Vehicles" in order that we would not lose touch with what was going on. Old films were kept in their dungeons and we are now given that atrocious revival at our local cinema on Sundays "For One Day Only."

It is interesting to see a list of revivals showing in New York. *The Thirty-Nine Steps* is nearly always being shown somewhere. This was by no means an avantgarde picture but solid entertainment, yet it can stand being shown again and again. It had something which has made it last the years and I think that something was its Director Alfred Hitchcock—who was an artist.

If a film will stand the passing of years then it can safely be said the Cinema is an Art but if one production is made obsolete by the next then the Cinema is an Industry.

Let us hope we shall still have revivals which are as worthy of our money to-day as they were in the past. Let us hope that they will not be confined to the specialised cinemas not always within the reach of many. Let us hope they will be at our "Local" on Sundays.

Wanted—Leading Man

Margaret Lockwood's latest film, *Two Cities' The Madness of the Heart*, is now in production at Denham Studios. Additions to the cast include Kathleen Byron, Maxwell Reed and Thora Hird. The leading actor who will play opposite Miss Lockwood has not yet been cast. The title of *The Madness of the Heart*, a strong emotional melodrama adapted from a novel by Flora Sandstrom, is a quotation from Byron—"Jealousy is the Madness of the Heart." The film will be directed by Charles Bennett, who has prepared the scenario, and produced by Richard Wainwright.

DESIGN BY INSPIRATION

by Joy Peake

INSPIRATION for the creation of beautiful clothes is gathered from innumerable sources by our leading designers. It may come from intensive period research, including the national costumes of foreign countries, and from nature in her many moods, or from the paintings of famous artists as recently shown in the Renoir influence. The imagination can be kindled by the flash of jewels and birds' wings—the delicate colourings of old flower prints, ancient embroideries and rich Oriental fabrics. Perhaps ideas come



to life through the colour schemes and forms suggested by a visit to a special exhibition such as the Indian art, when a flood of creative energy will find release.

Films too, play an important part in fashion trends, as for example Cecil Beaton's ravishing costumes for *An Ideal Husband* and the captivating dresses worn by Vivian Leigh in *Anna Karenina* and other productions in which she has appeared.

Opportunities for research in the field of fashion are unlimited. Carla Lehmann is photographed on this page wearing the "Countess Dress" in the film *Fame is the Spur* from the novel by Howard Spring. It is in two colours and a cascade of drapery falls from the hip, and the bodice is trimmed with bobble braiding. The attractive bonnet is lined with delicate net frills, framing the face, and tied with embroidered satin ribbons.

From this gown Ian Meredith designed a model dress to meet modern requirements. It is in ice blue and black moss crepe with braid trimming and a modified form of side draping. This dress was on sale at all the big stores in the country at the time the film was released.

When an important film is made manufacturers sometimes co-operate with the large film organisations and arrange to reproduce or adapt the screen costumes for general sales, allied to a widespread advertising campaign. These films have nationwide promotion, and fashions can be strongly influenced by them.

Because screen fashions are usually very advanced, they indicate what will eventually become popular.



Model dress designed by Meredith and adapted from the gown pictured below.

Designing for the films is a highly specialised job, requiring quite a different technique, as there are so many points to be considered. The actress who will wear the clothes must be closely studied from every angle, and the costumes must be in sympathy with the particular scene in which they are to be worn.

Allied to this there should be knowledge of lighting effects and what colours and materials will be most successful before the camera. Prolonged training and study in this branch of fashion is a necessity.

More scope should be provided in this direction so that many of our promising young designers could obtain the knowledge required and use their talents in the growing British film industry.

CARLA LEHMANN

She is seen here wearing the lovely "Countess dress" in the film "Fame is the Spur."

SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC

WITHOUT simplicity there is no pity; without pity, hardly a sense of tragedy; we are not moved. There are vast expanses of snow and ice, but never do we experience the horror of the men confronted with such unspeakable monotony. The winds cruelly blow, the frost bites sores in the explorers' cheeks; but never do we, the audience, experience any small part of their sufferings. From the start to the finish of this film we remain merely onlookers.

The photography is beautiful, and the colour is extremely delicate. The music, too, is in keeping, anticipating with its very first notes the dirge-like quality of the tale. And there is fine acting from John Mills, as Scott, James Robertson Justice, as Taff Evans, and Derek Bond, as Oates. But the film, as a whole, due to its complete lack of sympathy, just does not make the grade.

B.N.

UP IN CENTRAL PARK

THIS film is a profligate waste of Deanna Durbin's considerable talents. The story is dreary; the music, by Sigmund Romberg, is even drearier. And the close-ups of Dick Haymes' face are quite repulsive. Only the performance of Vincent Price, as the crooked political boss, kept me awake. This beautifully-spoken actor can give most of the younger British stars a few lessons in diction. And, incidentally, if we must import American actors, then for heaven's sake let's choose artists like Vincent Price to work in British studios; let the faded matinee idols remain in Hollywood.

Praise from America

Speaking in America on his recent purchase of The Fallen Idol for the highest purchase price ever paid for a British film, David O. Selznick said: "I believe that The Fallen Idol is one of the finest films made anywhere in the world in recent years. It is brilliantly directed by Carol Reed and the performances of Sir Ralph Richardson, Michele Morgan and the nine-year-old boy Bobby Henrey, are superb."

Reviewing

the Films

AN ACT OF MURDER

THIS is an exceptionally adult film.

A particularly stern judge learns that his wife is suffering from an incurable disease. She is dying, in terrible pain. He is faced with the most important decision in his life: should he let her linger in agony or should he put her out of her pain, forever? He chooses the latter course, and, ironically enough, he, the judge who has always refused to acknowledge the mitigating circumstances in the crimes of others, now stands in the dock accused of murder.

There is screen acting of the highest degree from Frederic March, the judge, and Florence Eldridge, as his wife.

SECRET BEYOND THE DOOR

ALLOW me to quote from my synopsis:—

"He (an architect played by Michael Redgrave) collects rooms in which murders have been committed and adds them as wings to the house."

Yes, honestly, that's the kind of a film it is! In fact, it is one of the very worst films I have ever had the misfortune to see. And the dialogue is very definitely the most stupid and pretentious that I have heard since the advent of talking pictures.

Now, I can understand Redgrave—with the actor's natural egotism—wanting to play the part of the "schizophrenic." But I just don't see what Joan Bennett hoped to get out of her role as the society heiress he marries. And still less can I understand why Fritz Lang, of all people, should have chosen to produce and direct this incredibly asinine picture.

RIVER LADY

THIS Western-type picture in Technicolor provides pleasant entertainment. Lumberjacks, gamblers, rapids, dynamite, shootings—all are included in this wholesome spectacle.

Good performances from Rod Cameron, Yvonne de Carlo and Dan Duryea.

CALL NORTHSIDE 777

THIS gripping film tells the true story of a man sentenced to life imprisonment for a murder he did not commit. For 13 long years his mother, retaining her intense faith in her son's innocence, scrubs floors, saving every penny in order to offer a 5,000 dollar reward for information about the real murderers.

The acting of Kasia Orzazewski, as the mother, will bring tears to your eyes. And both Richard Conte, the son, and James Stewart, the cynical reporter who eventually ensures that justice is done, help to make this a memorable film.

IT'S HARD TO BE GOOD

I GOT the impression that the screenwriter, Jeffrey Dell—who is also the director—sat down and scribbled the entire script for this picture in the matter of a mere half hour or so. The story is infuriatingly patchy—one moment the film is serious, next humorous, then serious again; a little later it is just silly, then, in turn, satirical, whimsical, farcical. Finally, it ends in disgustingly bad taste.

I suppose most of it can be described as fairly amusing. Those taking part are Jimmy Hanley, Anne Crawford and Raymond Huntley.

R.H.



STAR OF THE MONTH—ANN TODD

